(c) if so, how Government would protect interest of the indigenous firms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has already evolved amendments in Indian Standards for Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water in order to align them with the world's best norms for pesticide residues.

(b) and (c) All the manufacturers of the Packaged Drinking Water and Natural Mineral Water irrespective of their status, will have to upgrade their manufacturing facilities to meet the revised norms prescribed in the relevant Indian Standards to ensure bottled water of reliable quality to common consumers. The equipment required to upgrade facilties as per the revised norms will cost around Rs. 30 lakhs and is indigenously available. The manufacturers who do not adhere to the revised specifications in the relevant Indian Standards, shall not be permitted to use BIS Standard Mark.

Sugar stock

†2362. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that more than 15 million quintals of sugar stock is available in the sugar mills of the cooperative and corporate sector in Uttaranchal;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has sought assistance from the Central Government to make arrangements for selling this sugar;

(c) whether sugar of the State has also been included in the buffer stock of sugar being established by the Central Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) The stock of sugar in the sugar factories of the State of Uttaranchal after March,. 2003 release (Levy and Non-Levy) was 3.08 lakh M.Ts. Sugar stocks keep in changing as sale/dispatch of sugar for non-levy, levy and exports is a continuous process.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Based on the request of the State of Uttaranchal, the Central Government has released a quantity of 26000 M.Ts. of advance non-levy sugar upto 30.09.2002. Further, in order to enable the sugar factories to liquidate their stocks, the following measures have been taken:-

(i) The Doiwala sugar factory has been provided temporary relief by way of permitting them to sell 700 M.Ts. of non-levy sugar equivalent to the unlifted levy sugar stocks.

(ii) The quantitative ceiling on export of sugar has been removed.

(iii) The Sugar Development Fund (SDF) Act, 1982 and the SDF Rules, 1983 have been amended, enabling reimursement of the internal transport costs and neutralization of ocean freight disadvantage on export shipments of sugar.

(c) All the sugar mills of Uttaranchal State has been allocated buffer stock based on the stocks available on 31.10.2002.

(d) A quantity of 41979 M.Ts. has been allocated as buffer stock to the ten sugar mills of Uttaranchal.

Wage structure of labourers in FCI

2363. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the present wage structure of temporary/casual labourers working with FCI; and

(b) the details of the welfare schemes formulated by Government for these labourers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) Casual labourers engaged in the depots of the Food Corporation of India for foodgrains handling operations are paid the wages as prescribed by the local District Collector/District Magistrate.

(b) These labourers are eligible for the benefits of Provident Fund, Gratuity and Workmen Compensation as per statutory provisions.